

Matthew T.H. Roffe

According to the Veteran's card information in the Newton Veteran's office, Matthew Roffe was born in 1801 and was 60 years old when he enlisted with the Mass. 1st Regiment Company A. Matthew was married to Catherine Hiller and living in Newton Center with two children while working as a shoemaker.

This is the wrong Matthew; he was actually Matthew T.H.'s father. Thanks to the wonders of the internet, we know that the soldier Matthew T.H. Roffe was 22 years old and living in Newton Center working as a carrier as early as 1859. On October 19, 1861, Matthew T.H. enlisted with the Mass. 1st Regiment Cavalry, Company and served two years in the war. He was able to return home at the expiration of his service on October 24, 1864, but succumbed to chronic diarrhea on June 19, 1865. His father, Matthew, died two years later. Matthew T.H. Roffe is buried in Newton Cemetery.

Company A of the Mass. 1st Cavalry Regiment organized at Camp Brigham, Reedville, and served there until December 25, 1861 when they embarked for Annapolis and then Hilton Head, S.C. Company A moved to Fort Monroe August 19, 1862; then to Washington, D.C. to join Pleasanton's Cavalry, Army of the Potomac, at Tenallytown, until October, 1862. Major battles in which this regiment participated before Matthews mustered out included Antietam, Manassas Gap, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg.

Other Newton men who served with Roffe on the Mass. 1 Cavalry Regiment and whose names join his on the Newton Soldiers' Monument are: Theodore Bracket, 33, also in Company A, who was accidentally shot in 1863; William A. Harris, 28, died of his wounds from Snicker's Gap in 1865; Elliot Littlefield, 38, died a prisoner of war in 1864; John Myers, 58, died after the war; and Harvey L. Vinton, 37, died a prisoner of war in 1864.